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# Recensions / Book Reviews

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FRINK, Lisa, Rita SHEPARD and Gregory A. REINHARDT (eds)  
2002 *Many Faces of Gender: Roles and Relationships through Time in Indigenous Northern Communities*, Boulder, University Press of Colorado and Calgary, University of Calgary Press, 257 pages.

This collection of 12 papers on gender research in the North developed from a 1998 Alaskan Anthropology Association conference session on the same theme. While the editors state only that the volume describes and analyzes northern Native gender roles, the authors of the concluding chapter suggest a more structured objective: to examine the influence of gender relations and gender ideology on the construction of social landscapes and the formation of the archaeological record (p. 196). The organization of the book into three sections: contemporary research (papers by Stewart, Ackerman and Jolles); historical and ethnoarchaeological approaches (papers by Shepard, Tobey and Frink); and material and spatial analyses (papers by Crass, Reinhardt, Hoffman and Whitridge), along with the editors' introduction and a final chapter by Brumbach and Jarvenpa, reflects this worthwhile intent.

In the lead article on contemporary research, Henry Stewart presents a unique type of gender change among the Netsilik through his long-term study of *kipijuituq*, male children raised as female for a period of time. Although he was not able to establish the function or the circumstances under which this practice occurs, his study, as Brumbach and Jarvenpa note (p. 207), draws attention to the gender transformations and third-gender phenomena of Inuit cultures as well as the difficulty of using Western dichotomies (for example, male/female) to explain non-Western cultural behaviour. Lillian Ackerman's chapter on the Colville Indians of Washington State is out of place in a volume about circumpolar research and lies outside the scope of a review for *Études/Inuit/Studies*. The paper that follows is a life history narrative of Yupik educator Linda Womkon Badten. Carol Zane Jolles' tribute describes their friendship and Badten's contributions to Aleutian research, while highlighting the rapid cultural changes experienced over one lifetime.

Both Rita Shepard and Jennifer Tobey draw largely on the work of other researchers to consider the impact of 19th-century religious missions on Alaskan household activity patterns and gender roles and suggest potential lines of inquiry. Lisa Frink's exploration of subsistence fish production in western Alaska emphasizes the critical contributions of Yupik women by detailing their management of the processing, storage, distribution and consumption of this resource. These papers expand our understanding of Aboriginal gender roles in the North and provide a foundation for developing models to interpret the archaeological record. However, more than a decade after the publication of several books on the archaeology of gender, including Joan

Gero and Margaret Conkey's (1991) seminal volume, archaeologists should be well beyond "raising women's visibility" and be engaged in the actual analysis of archaeological data. The following papers attempt to do just this.

The last four chapters deal with material and spatial correlates of gender. Barbara Crass analyzes Inuit burials from across the Arctic to determine general trends in the post-mortem treatment of infants, children and adults. Gregory Reinhardt's reassessment of an earlier study on gendered household space revisits the catastrophic preservation of a North Alaskan Thule house. Brian Hoffman replicates bone needles to explain the change in form from eyed to grooved that occurred in the Unangan material culture of the Eastern Aleutian Islands 1,000 years ago. Peter Whitridge's interest in the roots of social complexity forms the basis of his paper on Thule gender and household status differences expressed in patterns of metal consumption. I have serious concerns with each of these chapters and review them in greater detail below.

Crass' examination of Inuit burial patterns argues for the need to include the study of children and infants in gender research but is frequently difficult to follow. For example, Table 8.5, which accompanies her discussion of multiple burials, does not provide data on adults buried with adults. In addition, the text reverses the figures presented in the table regarding the relative proportion of children buried with men and with women (p. 113-114). The tables contain numerical errors (e.g., infant graves total 16 in Table 8.2 but 26 in Table 8.4); undefined labels (e.g., Table 8.6 is entitled "Significant Goods"), and unexplained column headings (e.g., the difference between "M/F," presumably an adult of unidentified sex, and "A" in Table 8.5 is unclear). Still, these are minor problems compared with the statistical analyses she presents. It is impossible to evaluate her findings because Crass does not provide contingency tables, nor identify the type of chi-squared test used, indicate the degrees of freedom or explain why different significance levels are used within a single analysis. Her burial goods analysis exemplifies these concerns. Crass groups artifacts into six categories: subsistence items; tools (including items for subsistence gathering); personal adornments; a lumped class entitled "magic/ritual/recreation"; raw materials; and miscellaneous items (not identified) but does not indicate how many adult and child burials contain each of these artifact categories. Instead, Table 8.6 lists chi-squared values and probability limits for just three types of items without any reference to age/sex groups. In the only two cases for which she provides raw data, the sample sizes are inadequate to perform chi-squared tests. She concludes that adults and children were buried with different types of items but does not discuss gender differences in grave goods found in sexed adult burials. Crass' examination of the relative numbers of burial goods associated with adults and children is also confusing. Initially, she indicates that there was no significant difference between graves containing goods and those without (p. 117) but later on the same page (and again on p. 119) she notes that there is "[a] trend for proportionally more adults to have a greater number of goods than infants and children [...] in graves."

Reinhardt's contribution offers a rare opportunity to contemplate the *process* of analysis and in this respect his reexamination of earlier work on the spatial correlates of gender at the Utqiaguk site is a useful teaching tool. Unfortunately, there are problems

with Reinhardt's reanalysis as well. His graphs, which are actually tables, are inaccurate (totals presented for every cell in Graphs 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5 do not correspond with the data presented in the distribution maps); they also lack labels and are not listed in the table of contents. Furthermore, Reinhardt never explains the basis for his fundamental assumption of gender-sidedness within Thule houses nor does he clarify why he limits his study to the house floor and sleeping platform and excludes the kitchen, tunnel and associated storage areas. From his revaluation of the artifact distribution, Reinhardt concludes that women's artifacts occur not just on the "women's side" but also in the house center, while men's artifacts are primarily located around the periphery and are only slightly more prevalent on the "men's side." In other words, it is not just a matter of gendered sides, as the original study had concluded; something else was at play. This significant difference disappears, however, when the corrected totals are used—i.e., there is no relation between gender and space. Reinhardt subsequently plots the distribution of two types of gendered manufacturing debris, sewing scraps and chert flakes, and their relative proximity to the lamp stand. He finds the reverse pattern: more sewing refuse is located on the "men's side," while more of the few flakes recovered, which possibly represent expedient cutting tools, are from the "women's side." Here, the corrected totals increase the already highly significant difference that Reinhardt observes. He then considers the relative distributions of cached (peripheral) versus non-cached (central) artifacts and notes that men's artifacts consisted primarily of cached items located away from the lamp. Reinhardt concludes that rather than representing gendered work sides, the distributions of gendered artifacts and refuse reflect the active use of the house interior by women, who sewed by the lamp and discarded skin scraps away from the area or stored them in the large sub-floor cache (p. 143-144), and the storage of men's goods, with men undertaking most of their tool work in a separate structure, the *qargi* (pl. *qariyit*), and holding a "marginalized place [...] in daily domestic activities" (p. 149).

Hoffman investigates a shift in Aleutian needle forms from eyed to grooved and asks if the change was a function of manufacturing costs, durability or needle diameter. Although his research is well conceived, his method is problematic. For example, to test the first two hypotheses, Hoffman uses untrained students to manufacture only five replica needles. Not only are the copies made from less robust ptarmigan elements, instead of traditional gull and albatross bones; they are shorter and thicker than the archaeological examples and are used to sew heavy cotton cloth with polyester thread rather than to sew skins with sinew thread. Hoffman assesses relative durability by having the students sew for a maximum 20-minute period. He determines that the two forms are equally easy to produce and are equally durable. Using unpublished studies of needle replication (not his own) and archaeological data, Hoffman concludes that grooved needles are narrower than eyed ones and that this feature, not manufacturing costs or strength, was key to their widespread replacement of eyed needles. The presumed advantage of the narrower grooved needles was that they allowed Aleutian women to sew "finely stitched and elaborately decorated garments" (p. 152). While he cites ethnohistoric support for the respect that women enjoyed for this skill at the time of European contact, several centuries later, Hoffman fails to provide corroborating evidence either in the form of skin clothing recovered from archaeological sites or from experimental analysis of stitch size, decorative sewing, and the use of thin or fragile

skins in relation to needle form. Also, it is unclear how this publication relates to Hoffman's ongoing research on gender roles, prestige-goods production and household status. Are grooved needles associated only with high-status households (p. 152) or does that remain to be determined (p. 163)? If Hoffman *can* demonstrate a connection between grooved needles and the production of high-status clothing, then he will contribute significantly to an understanding of Unangan women as active agents in the design, manufacture and exchange of useful tools and prestige trade goods (as Brumbach and Harvenpa [p. 206] believe he has already done). However, in order to do so, Hoffman should extend his experimental work using experienced craftspeople with appropriate materials and link these results more clearly to his archaeological findings.

Whitridge's study of gender and household hierarchies is based on a number of problematical assumptions and mathematical errors. He assumes, but does not demonstrate, that the excavated structures at the large Classic Thule site of Qariaragyuk, occupied over a 250-year period, were contemporaneous and that household differences in the consumption of prestige goods, such as metal, are related solely to *men's* participation in whaling activities at a single point in time. According to Whitridge, a gender hierarchy developed from this focus on whale hunting, which was expressed spatially by the segregation of men's activities in *qariyit* (men's workshops/community ceremonial structures), reflecting their higher status, and the segregation of women's activities in detached kitchens within the houses, signifying the "concealing and marginalising" (p. 172) of their lower-status work. This presumed gender inequality was also manifested in differential access to raw materials for tools and dress.

To test for gendered differences in the use of ground stone and metal for bladed tools, Whitridge measured the blade slot width in the surviving tool hafts and found a bimodal distribution for each artifact type, with thinner slots assumed to represent metal blades and thicker slots assumed to represent ground stone or bone blades. A more direct approach would be to measure the tool blades in order to establish the range of blade widths for each material and type of artifact and then to determine the relationship between blade thickness and slot width using complete tools.

When less evidence of metal tools than expected is recovered from the *qargi*, Whitridge surmises that "individuals with and without privileged access to exotic trade goods" used this space (p.182), which seemingly refutes the idea that the *qargi* exclusively represented a high status men's house. Perhaps this explains why more than half of all ulus (women's knives) are found there as well. Part of the problem with the analysis is that gendered tool use is conflated with gendered tool manufacturing. In addition to using items, men were also making and repairing articles for themselves, and for others. Some of these contained metal blades; some did not. Moreover, the other, communal, function of the *qargi* is not addressed in this analysis.

Whitridge's main table (Table 11.2) contains numerous errors: nine of 14 column totals and 12 of 30 row totals are incorrect. For example, he lists only three thin-slotted tools for House 35, when, according to his data, there are eight, and two thin-slotted tools for House 29, when there are 11. House 6, which is not identified in the text nor



on the site map and which contains no bladed tools, is inexplicably included in this table, although it is absent in the previous distribution table. These errors affect his general conclusions, namely, that four of the five houses contained evidence of above average metal consumption based on tool slot widths. While he does not define what the "site-wide mean" is nor how he calculates it, I presume that, since his discussion concerns *household* consumption patterns, the mean derives from the five dwellings (Houses 29, 33, 34, 35, and 38) and not the workshop/community structure (House 41) or the unidentified structure (House 6). The corrected house totals indicate that just two houses (Houses 33 and 38) lie above the site-wide mean; three (Houses 29, 34 and 35) are below. The spatial isolation, reduced access to community surplus and social distance ascribed to House 29 cannot explain Houses 34 and 35, which show evidence of less high-status metal use but, according to Whitridge, significant involvement in high-status whale hunting and/or consumption. This last point we have to take on trust because corroborating evidence in the form of artifact and faunal data are not presented. This is a problem common to Crass and Hoffman's chapters as well: all are condensed versions of dissertation research that make use of uncited data. In Whitridge's case, we cannot determine, as he does, that there is a correlation between exotic metals consumption and other markers of household wealth, status, and economic orientation (p. 185), but the corrected totals suggest otherwise.

The mistakes in Table 11.2 also affect his conclusions regarding gender-associated metal consumption. For example, although Whitridge claims that only 11% of the ulu handles held iron blades and 38% of men's knives took iron blades, "significantly more than women's ulus" (p. 187), the real frequencies are 37% and 42%, respectively. As a final point, relative frequencies of copper and iron stated to be "precisely reversed for men's and women's objects" (*ibid.*), actually indicate that (lower-value) copper was used in similar proportions for men's and women's items, while (higher-value) iron was more common in men's artifacts. The fact that men used more *types* of bladed tools than women is relevant, a point which Whitridge notes but does not address. In sum, the evidence does not support Whitridge's conclusion that his results are "consistent with expectations for privileged access to the most precious trade goods by men and whaling households" (p. 189).

This book's value lies in the interesting themes and issues it raises about the "recursive relationship between ideology, action and spatial relations" (Pader 1988 in this volume, p. 76), particularly in the context of Native Alaskan cultures, which are the focus of more than half the papers. One of these issues is the relationship between *qariyit*, family dwellings and other activity areas within a site. Shepard, Tobey, Reinhardt and Whitridge examine gender relations at the household level but extend their discussions to include "men's houses." In their concluding article, Brumbach and Jarvenpa note the widely diverging perspectives of Ackerman and Reinhardt, who suggest that these structures represent male isolation and marginalization, and Whitridge, to whom they signify high male-status segregation. Brumbach and Jarvenpa offer an alternative interpretation based on their research on changing patterns of Chipewyan domestic space. They suggest that *qariyit* and detached kitchens could represent "increased specialization and separation of male and female economic roles" rather than status-related segregation (p. 204). None of the authors, however, discusses

the other use of *qariyit*, for community celebrations and rituals, and the issue of identifying these two functions: workshop and community center, in the archaeological record. Despite its problems, archaeologists, ethnohistorians and anthropologists will find this book a source of ideas and approaches for conducting gender research in the North.

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2006 *Die Inuit: Ein Volk der Arktis*, Zurich, Verlag Pestalozzianum und Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich, 142 pages (and a CD).

Bringing cultural anthropology into primary and secondary schools in German-speaking countries has been increasingly successful in recent years. The work of the organization "Ethnologie in Schule und Erwachsenenbildung e.V." (Muenster, Germany) provides an excellent example for the success of this movement. Ulrike Kaiser has contributed to these endeavours with *Die Inuit: Ein Volk der Arktis*. This book primarily addresses teachers and in parts also pupils. It gives an overview of Inuit culture, society, history, and contemporary situation in the first part. The second part provides the teacher with thematic ideas for the lesson plan, text materials and a CD with a large sample of photographs, Inuit art and music. A commented bibliography offers guidelines for further reading.

The book has decidedly weak (part 1) and strong (part 2) aspects that I will discuss in this order. While emphasizing its aim to deconstruct the standard pre-conceptions of Inuit culture (such as: Inuit still live in igloos), the first part does not entirely achieve this goal. A somewhat dry and boring overview of "traditional" Inuit culture leaves very little space for contemporary Inuit ways of life. While the reader will take away a more nuanced view of life in the pre-Christian, pre-settlement and pre-western technology past from his readings, s/he will have no better idea of how Inuit live today nor of how the past is relevant for the present. S/he will complete this reading with the